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# Advocate of Peace.

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## What the Peace Movement Is.

Hardly had the editor of this paper set foot on his native soil, on returning from the Geneva Peace Congress, when he was met with the challenge: "Well, your Peace Congress proved a failure, didn't it? You did not prevent the Balkan war," and the speaker looked particularly satisfied with this poser. Worse still, a member of the Peace Congress itself was heard to say after its close, "The Peace Congress has been a joke. War has followed it immediately." A number of newspapers have indulged in similar railleries at the supposed expense of the peace societies, some of them half in joke, others seemingly in all seriousness.

It is needless to say that those who thus criticise or mock have no conception, or only a vague conception, of the aims and methods of the peace organizations. It would be fine work, certainly, if these societies could step in and prevent hostilities after mobilization of armies and fleets had begun and the leashes of passion let go. but that is not what they were or-

ganized for, and no attempt by any one of them in this direction has ever met with any success.

The purpose of the peace movement is, fundamentally, twofold: First, to educate and transform public opinion in regard to the relations between nations and their mutual obligations; to show the essential character of war, its inherent iniquity and savagery, its destructiveness and degrading influence on peoples, its inefficiency and futility as a means of adjusting controversies; and, second, to promote the establishment, by the governments, of international institutions and methods for the pacific settlement of differences, the conclusion of treaties of arbitration, the establishment of international courts of justice, a parliament of nations, etc., such as will remove all excuse for war by furnishing an adequate substitute for it.

It is along these lines that the peace movement has done its work and had its remarkable success. It would be easy to show that the movement, since its organization nearly one hundred years ago, has been most influential in preventing wars and lessening their number, not by rushing into the arena when blood was up and hostilities beginning, but by steadily pointing out a better way and more sensible means of dealing with disputes, by helping to remove international misunderstandings, by securing the arbitration of disputes, by the promotion of international respect and forbearance, and of a general world conscience which is more and more demanding the application of moral principles and of law to international affairs as well as to private affairs. No other moral movement of the past century has so much to its credit in this larger way as the peace movement, as the numerous cases of actual arbitration, the holding of the Hague Conferences, and the setting up of the permanent court of arbitration bear witness. This movement goes steadily on widening and deepening, in spite of occasional wars growing out of the old ideas of national honor and the old prejudices and hatreds still surviving from the past, and such conflagrations as those which have been witnessed in the last two years, whose causes are many generations old, are only incidentally related to it.

The trouble in the Balkan peninsula is that no peace work has been done there. The ideas, policies and methods of the pacifists have been practically unknown both to the Turkish government and to a considerable extent to the Balkan peoples, which have been ruled as with a rod of iron, and hence grown exasperated and turbulent. What is going on is nothing but the natural fruit of a régime of violence and oppression such as the world has probably nowhere else seen—a régime which has been kept in

place and protected for selfish ends by the European powers, whose spirit of greed and empire has survived so conspicuously in its dealings with that region, in spite of their progress in the application of the principles and policies of the pacifists in dealing with each other.

The maintenance of peace cannot be expected under such conditions. The pacifists, who have been so far a comparatively small folk and have not had the means with which to push their propaganda into many parts of the world, are therefore not in any way responsible for the breaking down of peace in the Balkan peninsula. The failure to keep the peace must be charged to the imperialism which has dominated that section and to the European powers who have iniquitously maintained it for their own ends. Indeed, there has been no peace there to break down. What has existed for long generations has been essentially war, in its deepest spirit and essence. The smoldering fires have at last burst forth into a raging conflagration and are wasting and consuming the land. And whatever the outcome of the present conflict may be, there can never be a real and assured peace in the Balkan peninsula until it is imbued with the principles and policies which the pacifists have been promulgating for nearly a century, namely, the right of peoples freely to dispose of themselves, the application of the Golden Rule in international affairs, the substitution of mutual respect and confidence for contempt, abuse and distrust. The sooner the powers of Europe and the inhabitants of the Balkan peninsula learn this, the better for their own security and honor and for the peace and order of the rest of the world. The peace party of the world will continue its propaganda in behalf of these principles and the new international order which will be their legitimate fruit until love is substituted for hatred and law for lawlessness between all peoples and governments.

### The Inherent Weakness of Militarism.

One of the most striking lessons of the war now raging in the Balkan peninsula is that of the inherent weakness and destructiveness of militarism. The lesson, however, did not need to be taught again. History is full of it. All of the military kingdoms and empires in the past perished either by reason of the jealousies and dissensions which sprung naturally up within them, the hostilities engendered by them outside of their borders, or because of the internal corruptions and rottenness which are the fruit of the system. The harvest is sometimes long delayed, but it always comes in the end.

One hardly needs to allude to the sudden collapse of the Turkish imperialism and militarism as if it were a strange thing. The collapse would have occurred long ago but for the support thrown around the "sick man" by certain European powers.

But the thing chiefly to be noted is the helplessness of Europe, in spite of her great military and naval

establishments, in the presence of the situation in the Near East. The European powers, under the terms of the Hague Conventions, were solemnly pledged to try to prevent the conflict which has occurred, but they were so blinded and paralyzed by their own greed and selfishness, so lulled into inactivity by the sense of security given them by their great armaments, and so trammelled by their mutual suspicions and fears that they seem not to have known that the storm was at hand. How to proceed after it had burst, they seem to have had no idea. Their diplomatic *pourparlers* as to what they should do to bring the war to an end have been pitiable in the extreme. They have been bound hand and foot by their great military establishments and the spirit behind these. At the moment of this writing, instead of unitedly attempting to do something to induce the allies and Turkey to cease fighting, they are apparently dividing into two camps, the Triple Alliance on one side and the Triple Entente on the other. The result of this, if it really takes place, will be to prolong the war and the awful sufferings from famine and disease which are following in its wake. If in this situation the long-talked-of general war in Europe does not occur, it will be next to a miracle. None of the nations want this war. Indeed, they are all anxious to avoid it, though they are one and all pursuing policies which, if continued, make it inevitable. Even if the powers of Europe come to some agreement and act in common, it seems almost sure that they will take such a course in regard to the Turkish power as will leave the seeds of future war widely sown in the peninsula. Militarism is a deadly upas tree.

The Balkan war is the final condemnation, not only of the Turkish imperialism and militarism which has broken down with internal decay, but also of the whole system of European militarism which has rendered the governments of Europe powerless to lift a hand to do a good deed at a very critical moment. If the nations and peoples of Europe would only open their eyes and use a little historic sense, they would immediately discover that until they abandon their present rivalry and begin in good faith to reduce their armies and navies and to act like sane men, Europe will continue to suffer from periodic war scares, or, worse still, from bloody and desolating conflicts like that which is now ravaging the Balkan peninsula.

### The Anglo-German Understanding Conference.

We estimate that there are today over three hundred international organizations, and that during the year 1912 there have been approximately one hundred and thirty international conferences. One of the most significant of these gatherings was the Anglo-German